

Amendments to the Drawings

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Fig. 9. These sheets replace the original sheets. Specifically, the misspelling word “lover” in the box of the third column, second row of Fig. 9 has been replaced with “lower”.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet
 Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

REMARKS

In the drawings, Fig. 9 has been amended according to the Examiner's indication to correct the misspelling word "lover".

After the above claim amendments, Claims 15~20 have been withdrawn as the result of an earlier restriction requirement, Claims 2, 3 and 8 have been canceled, and Claims 1, 4, 7, 9 and 21 have been amended. Accordingly, Claims 1, 4~7, 9~14 and 21 are now pending for further prosecution.

Claim 4 has been amended to correct the informalities indicated by the Examiner.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112

To overcome the rejections of claims 1, 4~14 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, corresponding amendments have been made to clarify what is intended to be claimed by applicant. Claims 1 and 21 originally recite that "holding member fixedly positioning the plastic lens in a second direction perpendicular to the first direction". By this phrasing, applicant intended to mean that the plastic lens is fixedly positioned or retained in position by the holding member in the second direction, not mean that the holding member moves in the second direction. To clarify, applicant has introduced the recess feature of the present invention into claims 1 and 21. Claims 1 and 21 now each recites that "the recess receiving the plastic lens therein and retaining the plastic lens in position in a second direction perpendicular to the first direction", which is now believed to be clear. Removal of 35 U.S.C. 112 rejections to these claims is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(b)

Independent claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kohama et al. (4,660,401) or Kugler (2,526,955). To overcome these anticipation rejections, independent claim 1 has been amended to claim that "the holding member comprising ***a holding plate movable in the first direction*** and ***a holder*** directly and stationarily mounted on the holding plate, the holder defining ***a recess that opens in the first direction***". All these features as emphasized are not disclosed

or suggested by either Kohama nor Kugler. Particularly, both Kohama and Kugler fail to disclose a holder and a recess as claimed. The through hole in the feeding device 131 of Kohama that is deemed as the holding member by the Examiner opens in the second (horizontal) direction. Similarly, the through hole in the riveted plates 10, 11 of Kugler that are deemed as the holding member by the Examiner also opens in the second (horizontal) direction. Modifying the through hole of Kohama or Kugler into a recess as claimed would render the invention of Kohama or Kugler inoperable for its intended purpose. Accordingly, amended independent claim 1 is now believed to be distinctly patentable over both Kohama and Kugler.

Independent claim 21 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kohama et al. (4,660,401). Independent claim 21 has been amended in a manner similar to that of independent claim 1. Accordingly, independent claim 21 is now also distinctly patentable over Kohama. Removal of anticipation rejections to independent claims 1 and 21 is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Independent claims 1 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Waltonen (Re. 33,798) in view of Sartorio (5,894,754). The Examiner states that it would have been obvious to provide a holding member, a movable holding plate, guiding posts, an exchangeable holder and a recess in Waltonen as taught by Sartorio in order to position the workpiece at different positions.

To overcome these obviousness rejections, independent claim 1 has been amended to claim that “the holding member comprising a holding plate movable in the first direction and a holder ***directly and stationarily*** mounted on the holding plate, the holder defining ***a recess that opens in the first direction, the recess receiving the plastic lens therein and retaining the plastic lens in position in a second direction perpendicular to the first direction***”. Independent claim 21 also has been amended in a manner similar to that of independent claim 1. These features as emphasized above are not disclosed or suggested by Sartorio.

As shown in FIG. 1, Sartorio discloses a system for producing bent sheet-metal articles. The system includes a manipulator 64 for gripping and moving an initially flat piece of sheet metal to be subjected to bending operations by means of a bending machine 80. The manipulator 64 includes a vertically moavable device 66

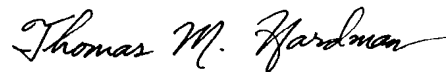
that carries a suspension head 76. As clearly shown in FIG. 12, the suspension head 76 can allow the sheet metal 180 to perform small movements in space with every degree of freedom except for rotation about an axis perpendicular to the plane of the undeformed sheet metal 180 (referring to claims 1, 3 and 7~9). The suspension head 76 has rapid engagement and release means for gripping and releasing a gripper 98 previously fitted on to the sheet metal 180 to be bent. The gripper 98 includes, as shown in FIG. 2, two resilient arms 100 and two plates of frictional material 102 fixed to the ends of the arms 100. A cavity 104 is defined between the two arms 100 for housing a mechanism for moving the arms 100 apart resiliently. The piece of sheet metal is gripped between the two plates of frictional material 102. Therefore, Sartorio fails to disclose or suggest a holding member comprising a holding plate movable in the first direction and a holder ***directly and stationarily*** mounted on the holding plate. The gripper 98, which is deemed as a holder as claimed by the Examiner, is indirectly and movably mounted on the vertically movable device 66. Further, Sartorio fails to disclose or suggest that the gripper 98 defines ***a recess that opens in the first (vertical) direction and receives the plastic lens therein***. The cavity 104 defined in the gripper 98 is substantially a chamber and does not open in the first (vertical) direction. Also, the cavity 104 is adapted to house a mechanism for moving the arms 100 apart resiliently, not adapted to receive the metal sheet 108 to be bent therein. Finally, Sartorio fails to disclose or suggest that ***the recess retains the plastic lens in position in a second (horizontal) direction perpendicular to the first (vertical) direction***. As described above in connection with FIG. 12, the sheet metal 180 of Sartorio is allowed by the suspension head 76 to perform small movements in space with every degree of freedom except for rotation about an axis perpendicular to its plane. Therefore, the sheet metal 180 of Sartorio is not retained in position in the horizontal direction. At least for these reasons provided above, amended independent claims 1 and 21 are now believed to be patentable over the combination of Waltonen and Sartorio. Since Sartorio fails to disclose or suggest the above mentioned features as claimed, even if the inventions of Waltonen and Sartorio are combined with each other in a manner as suggested by the Examiner, the present invention as claimed in independent claims 1 and 21 still would not be obtained. What is more important is that, suppose the system of Sartorio is further

modified to incorporate the above features of the present invention thereinto, the system of Sartorio would be rendered inoperable.

As discussed above, amended independent Claims 1 and 21 are now believed to be patentable over the cited references. Finally, dependent Claims 4~7 and 9~14, which depend directly or indirectly from independent Claim 1, should also be allowable.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the subject application is believed to be in a better condition for further consideration. Applicant respectfully solicits the Examiner to give another chance to reconsider the subject invention as now amended, and a timely office action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments